

COVID-19 Operating Plan for the Justin City Judiciary

Recognizing the need to ensure the health and safety of litigants, attorneys, visitors, court staff, judges, and other individuals entering the buildings housing the courts, the courts of the City of Justin will implement the following protective measures:

General

1. The Judge will comply with the Emergency Orders issued by the Supreme Court of Texas and Court of Criminal Appeals, including conducting in-person proceedings according to the guidance issued by the Office of Court Administration regarding social distancing, maximum group size, and other restrictions and precautions.
2. All judges will use all reasonable efforts to conduct proceedings remotely.
3. The presiding judge of the municipal court will maintain regular communication with the local health authority and mayor and adjust this operating plan as necessary with conditions in the city.
4. Judges will begin setting non-essential in-person proceedings no sooner than July 1, 2020

Judge and Court Staff Health

1. Judges and court staff who can perform the essential functions of their job remotely will telework when possible.
2. Judge and Court Staff Monitoring Requirements: require anyone who has symptoms be reset and allow reset for any defendant the feels at risk to appear in court.
3. Judges or court staff who feel feverish or have measured temperatures equal to or greater than 99.6°F, or with new or worsening signs or symptoms of COVID-19 such as cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, or having known close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter the building and should seek medical advice.
4. Judges and court staff will be required to wear face coverings, practice social distancing, and practice appropriate hygiene recommendations at all times.
5. Protective Measures:
 - a. Staff and visitors will be required to wear masks; disposable masks will be provided, if needed.
 - b. Staff and visitors will be strongly encouraged to sanitize their hands.
 - c. A one-way flow for entry and exit will be designated to maintain appropriate distancing to limit face-to-face contact.
 - d. No more than 10 individuals will be allowed into the Court room at any given time, including Judge and all support staff.
 - e. Seating in the Court room will be separated by a minimum distance of 6'.
 - f. Defendants will not approach the bench and will maintain a 6' distance from the prosecutor

- g. Without a personal appearance (phone, mail, or email), any Defendants in the Vulnerable Population will be given an opportunity to reschedule their case(s).
- h. Only the Judge, Court staff, prosecutor, bailiff, defendants, and legal counsel/guardians will be allowed in the Court room.

Scheduling

1. The following court schedules are established to reduce occupancy in the court building:
 - a. The Court dockets will be held multiple times per month, when feasible, with a maximum number of defendants set in order to limit all persons in the Court room at any given point to 10 or less.
 - b. Dockets may be scheduled for multiple time periods on a given day with adequate time for sanitizing in between dockets.

Vulnerable Populations

1. Individuals who are over age 65 and individuals with serious underlying health conditions, such as high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune systems are compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions requiring such therapy are considered to be vulnerable populations.
2. Each judge will include information on orders setting hearings, dockets notices, and in other communications notifying individuals who are in vulnerable populations of the ability to contact the court to identify themselves as a vulnerable individual and receive accommodations. A notice with this information will be posted on the courts' websites and in conspicuous locations around the court building (a copy of which is attached).
3. Vulnerable populations who are scheduled for court will be accommodated by postponing the court date.

Social Distancing

1. All persons not from the same household who are permitted in the court building will be required to maintain adequate social distancing of at least 6 feet.

Well

2. In each courtroom, the counsel tables, witness stand, judge's bench, clerk, and bailiff seating have been arranged in such a way so that there is social distancing of at least 6 feet between each space.

Hygiene

1. Hand sanitizer has been placed at the entrances to the building, outside of the courtroom, and outside of bathrooms.
2. Tissues have been placed near the door of the courtroom, at counsel tables, at the witness stand, on the judges' benches, and in the hallways.

3. The Department of State Health Service's "Stop the Spread of Germs Flyer" has been posted near the Court room.

Screening

1. When individuals attempt to enter the court building, staff will ask the individuals if they are feeling feverish; have a cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing; or have been in close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19. Individuals who indicate yes to any of these questions will be refused admittance to the court building and will be rescheduled for a later date.
2. Staff who are screening individuals entering the court building will be provided personal protective equipment, including face masks and/or shields, disposable gloves, and hand sanitizer.

Face Coverings

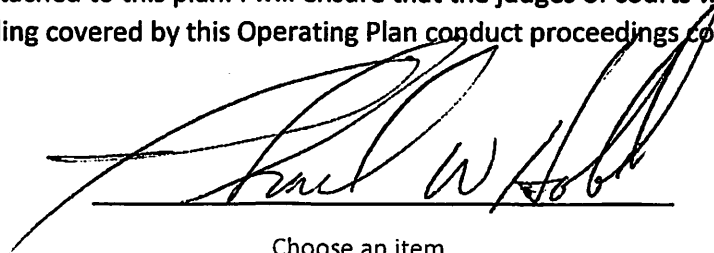
1. All individuals entering the court building will be required to wear face coverings at all times.
2. Individuals will be encouraged to bring cloth face coverings with them, but if the individual does not have a cloth face covering, a disposable face mask will be provided.
3. Individuals who will be required to be in the court building for over 1 hour will be provided surgical masks and required to wear them while in the court building if the supply is available.

Cleaning

1. Court building cleaning staff will clean the common areas of the court building so that common spaces are cleaned at least every court session.
2. Court building cleaning staff will clean the courtrooms between every hearing, between proceedings, and at the end of each day the courtroom is used.
3. Court building cleaning staff have been provided cleaning supplies shown to be effective with this coronavirus.
4. Court building cleaning staff have been trained on proper cleaning techniques and provided appropriate personal protective equipment.

I have attempted to confer with all judges of courts with courtrooms in the court building regarding this Operating Plan. In developing the plan, I consulted with the local health authority and mayor, documentation of which is attached to this plan. I will ensure that the judges of courts with courtrooms in the court building covered by this Operating Plan conduct proceedings consistent with the plan.

Date: 6/11/2020



Choose an item.



NOTICE

If you are over age 65, have serious underlying health conditions, such as high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, or a compromised immune system such as from chemotherapy for cancer or other conditions: Please DO NOT come to Court! Contact the Municipal Court and your case will be reset until a time that has been deemed safe.

Court Contact information:

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